

**Kathy Mora
on behalf of
the Montana Library Association**

Joint Appropriations Subcommittee on Education

Public Testimony

January 12, 2011

For the record, my name is Kathy Mora and I am Director of the Great Falls Public Library. I am also a member of the Montana Library Association and of the Network Advisory Council, the working group that helped to develop and implement the working guidelines for the current Statewide Courier Delivery Project.

I am in support of funding for the Statewide Courier Project for the 2013 Biennium. Great Falls Public Library serves as one of the 12 drop sites, or distribution hubs, for the project. Studies have demonstrated that savings to libraries through the use of a courier service are substantial. As one of the drop sites, we have ourselves experienced considerable savings in postage, supplies and staff time. These are savings that can then be directly applied to other services and collections that serve our community and others across the state.

Using the courier service, we have seen turnaround times that are substantially faster than using the postal service. Moving library materials using the postal service can take anywhere from a few days to 2-3 weeks, while the use of the courier can reduce that to as little as next day delivery. Although there is a book rate available to libraries through the postal service at a reduced price, it also receives a lower priority resulting in longer delivery times. Use of first class postage service is not an option, since it would effectively price us out of being able to provide materials to others across the state.

The courier project is currently contracting with Medical Logistics Solutions, a delivery service which already had established delivery routes into many of the communities our libraries are serving. Drop sites have either 5 day/week service or 2 day/week service at a cost of \$1175/month and \$470/month respectively. There are currently 9 drop sites at 5 day/week service and 3 drop sites at 2 day/week service, bringing the total monthly amount to \$11,985 to Medical Logistics Solutions.

It has been critical to the success of the project to build the infrastructure first – that is, the hubs or drop sites had to be in place first. The second step is to bring the serviced libraries, which were not funded through the initial pilot, into a fully functioning courier system. The total cost of the State Library's contract with Medical Logistics Solutions to provide service once all drop sites were added and beginning with the first full month of all drop sites on board (April 2010 through the end of the pilot June 30, 2011) will be \$153,366.

Served libraries or tier 2 libraries (those other than drop sites) are responsible for the cost of moving their materials to and from their assigned drop site. A few participating served libraries have hired Medical Logistic Solutions to provide this service. Medical Logistics Solutions offers these prices, as long as the library is located on a route that easily fits

their existing Montana routes: \$20/time for 2 day/week service and \$15/time for 5 day/week service, with costs decreasing the more the service is used. For a library that is located in the same town as their drop site, for example, University of Montana's Mansfield Library, the quoted cost from Medical Logistics Solutions is \$10/time for in-town pickup and delivery of materials. Some of these libraries may be able to continue using their own funding, but only if the volume were to reach the point where it is more cost effective to pay for a joint courier than to use the postal system. As more libraries are able to join the courier system, the volume of materials moving increases and costs decrease.

Other states have implemented highly successful and cost-effective courier systems, including COKAMO (serving Colorado, Kansas and Missouri) and Orbis Cascade (serving Washington, Oregon and Idaho). The Orbis Cascade system currently serves 70 drop sites and delivers to 270 libraries. The possibility is there to join these or other multi-state systems, effectively further lowering costs for all involved.

On a personal note, I obtained both a bachelors and master degree through a combination of distance and traditional methods. I used interlibrary loan services extensively through both degree programs and experienced first hand the value of being able to obtain materials not available in my own community, and in fact, those services were vital to my success. More and more individuals are taking advantage of distance education; however, resources they need to access for their education may not be readily available at their local library, particularly in small communities. The courier project exemplifies the value of resource sharing services that are provided in a cost-effective and rapid manner.

I urge you to support funding for this valuable service for all of our community members. I would also urge you not to view funding of the courier service as competitive with the State Library budget and the many essential services it provides the citizens of our state. State Library services and the courier system complement each other and increase resources available for the personal, social and economic development of all our citizens.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman and members of the committee for this opportunity to testify, and for your attention. I would be happy to answer any questions you may have.

Kathy Mora, Director
Great Falls Public Library
301 2nd Avenue North
Great Falls MT 59401
406-453-0349 ext. 221
kmora@greatfallslibrary.org

Joint Appropriations Subcommittee on Education

Public Testimony

January 12, 2011

For the record, my name is Samantha Pierson and I am President of the Montana Library Association. I am also Director of Lincoln County Public Libraries serving Libby, Troy, and Eureka.

I am in support of the Governor's budget for the Montana State Library.

The Montana State Library offers a wide variety of services to the citizens of Montana and to individual libraries throughout the state. Any additional reduction in the Montana State Library's budget would have a widely felt negative impact. A reduction would affect staffing, technology and important programs such as making government documents available in digital form.

A reduction in budget would reduce staffing in an already understaffed agency. The services these staff members provide to libraries such as mine are critical. Lincoln County Public Libraries is a small library system in the far corner of the state. With our strained budget we cannot afford to do things like travel long distances for training. The library staff and I rely heavily on the state library staff to keep us current in everything from technology to the latest library trends. Consulting librarians have come and trained the entire staff on relevant topics, helping to create a better library environment.

Without a proper budget current technology will be affected. Of special concern to me are things like the State Library's mobile laptop labs used for training across the state. These are essential for the staff. Mobile labs are the most efficient way to train large groups of librarians and trustees at once, such as they have done at our library. One consulting librarian with a lab can impact large areas of the state in a matter of days. But if this technology is not updated and maintained, the opportunity will be lost.

Programs such as the one currently making government documents available in digital format are also dear to my heart. Our county is filled with unemployed, lower income people. It is virtually impossible for many of them to complete a trip to Helena to research a governmental topic. Our library does the best it can ~~in~~ to obtain what information they need, but we too are limited in space, time, and money. Documents available to all in digital format is a great equalizer and access to this information does not have to be reliant on an individual's pocketbook. Having relevant, current information is essential and a budget reduction could

delay that. This digital program is just one of the many efforts the state library has undertaken to help all of Montana's citizens have the same access to information and learning, which can only benefit the state as a whole.

I encourage you to visit the State Library and their website. There is a wealth of information about library services and libraries themselves. Explore what libraries do for Montanans on a daily basis.

I urge you to consider the direct impact any additional budget reductions will have on Montanans access to information and the wealth of resources made available through our State Library.

Please vote "do pass" on HB2 for the Montana State Library.

Samantha Pierson, President
Montana Library Association
570 Conifer Road
Libby, MT 59923
406-293-9152
Samantha@libby.org

**Judy Hart
on behalf of
the Montana Library Association**

Joint Appropriations Subcommittee on Education

Public Testimony

January 12, 2011

Chairman Hollandsworth and Members of the Committee:

For the record, my name is Judy Hart and I am Chair of the Government Affairs Committee for the Montana Library Association. I am also Director of the Lewis & Clark Library serving Lewis and Clark County and Coordinator for the Broad Valleys Federation of Libraries.

As I stated before the **Joint Appropriations and Policy Committees** on January 5, 2011, I do stand in support of the Governor's budget for the Montana State Library.

I am here today on behalf of the Montana Library Association to request funding for the Statewide Courier Delivery Project for the 2013 Biennium and want to emphasize that this request is for funding above and beyond that of the proposed base budget for the Montana State Library.

The courier pilot, modeled after a number of successful programs in other states, was funded at \$80,000 per year, for a total of \$160,000 for the 2011 biennium. With this we were able to fund the critical courier infrastructure; the 12 main dropsite/distribution hubs. The original request had been for \$200,000 per year, which would have provided funding for the main dropsite distribution hubs and second tier dropsites, as well as stipends for those extremely remote communities that would by necessity be required to move materials by mail, the goal being that any participating library in Montana would receive some kind of funding support.

State Library staff has done an outstanding job managing the project, having negotiated through a lengthy RFP and contract process. The pilot has been up and running with a reliable courier for just 9 months, since April 2010. In this limited time we have learned it is a viable service and are committed to moving forward from the pilot and growing the project, particularly to the still unserved and remote, rural communities in Montana. Libraries of all types, public, school, academic and special libraries have expressed the importance of continuing and expanding the project.

As my colleagues have shared, our Montana libraries are busier than ever; there are increasing demands for services and resource sharing, yet we also have experienced budget cuts and constraints. Inter-library loan requests are sky-rocketing and moving materials via postal service is becoming more and more cost prohibitive. The courier delivery service offers low-cost rapid delivery and return of materials among libraries of all sizes and types. This inter-library loan courier maximizes library collections, particularly

libraries lacking sufficient budgets to adequately build their local collections, and the benefits to the public are that they now have access to a much larger collection.

In just nine short months the volume of materials delivered through the courier service has grown exponentially, and will continue to do so. We are beginning to experience cost savings at the local level, however the project needs time and funding to grow before reaching the threshold in which our primary method of delivery is the courier service, rather than by mail. Libraries using the courier system have experienced a per item cost, including postage, mailing supplies and staff time, drop from \$10.00 to \$12.00 per item to between \$1.00 to \$2.00 per item.

We are confident that full funding at the level requested to move from the pilot phase to permanent implementation of the project over the next biennium will grow the service statewide and allow time to leverage local dollars for the future. Montana libraries of all types currently participate in several statewide projects that are sustained by successful, shared cost formulas and supplemented by in most cases with Library Services and Technology Act funding, which is already stretched to the limit. We are working to identify a similar cost structure, with the aim of making courier services affordable to any library desiring them.

The project is in its' infancy, and without funding support the courier delivery service and participating libraries will not have the means to sustain, let alone grow the project.

The \$200,000 per year cost for the courier project is based on current and anticipated demand, population served, delivery alternatives, and information obtained from research of library courier systems operating in other states. During these difficult economic times we are constantly working to discover cost effective ways to provide quality services and resources to all Montanans. Funding will directly benefit and enhance the lives all Montanans. As this is a state-wide effort we would like to see some kind of on-going base funding from the state to help off-set local costs in the future. Funding at the state level is a standard source of support for many successful courier projects in other states.

I urge you to work to grow the state's investment in public library services at the local level by funding the Statewide Courier Delivery Program at \$200,000 per year, for a total of \$400,000 for the 2013 Biennium.

Thank you Mr. Chairman and members of the committee for this opportunity to testify, and for your consideration. I have provided you with some additional background information on the Courier Project and would be happy to answer any questions.

Judy Hart, Chair

Montana Library Association

120 S Last Chance Gulch

Helena, MT 59601

406-447-1690 ext. 117

jhart@mtlib.org

**Nanette Gilbertson
on behalf of
the Montana Library Association**

Joint Appropriations Subcommittee on Education

Public Testimony

January 12, 2011

Chairman Hollandsworth and members of the committee:

For the record, my name is Nanette Gilbertson and I represent the Montana Library Association. The Montana Library Association has over 800 members, including librarians, board members, trustees, friends of the libraries, paraprofessionals, and clerical staff. Our members work in public, school, academic, tribal, and special libraries across Montana.

First and foremost, the Montana Library Association supports the State Library Budget. Libraries throughout Montana are able to offer the quality services, programs, and materials to their patrons because of the State Library.

In addition to supporting the State Library Budget, the Montana Library Association would like to see the Courier Pilot Delivery Service funded. You heard from librarians, the real experts, about the details and importance of the Courier Pilot project, so I will speak to the funding aspect. I want to be clear that our priority is for the State Library to have their budget fully funded and intact. The Montana Library Association wants the Courier Project to be funded above and beyond the base budget for the State Library. We understand that it is bold to stand in front of this committee, in this economic environment and ask for additional funds. Clearly we would not do so if the library courier system were not critical.

In 2009 the Courier Pilot Project was funded with \$80,000 per year, rather than the \$200,000 requested, from the Coal Tax Severance Account. As Pam Joehler mentioned last week, the Coal Tax Severance Account is diminishing. As such the Montana Library Association requests that funding for the Courier Delivery Service comes from an alternative source.

Again, the Montana Library Association knows we are asking for a lot, but as revenue estimates are revised and as you work through the subcommittee process we ask you to keep this project at the forefront of your minds.

Thank you.

Nanette Gilbertson
Montana Library Association
34 West 6th Ave., Ste. 2E
Helena, MT 59601

Joint Appropriations and Policy Committees

January 5, 2011

Testimony

Chairman Hollandsworth and Members of the Committee:

For the record, my name is Judy Hart and I am Chair of the Government Affairs Committee for the Montana Library Association. I am also Director of the Lewis & Clark Library serving Lewis and Clark County and Coordinator for the Broad Valleys Federation of Libraries.

I am in support of the Governor's budget for the Montana State Library.

Our State Librarian, Darlene Staffeldt has described the depth of services offered through the Montana State Library that are available to every citizen in Montana. A reduction of 2.25 FTE from an already understaffed agency of only 30.5 FTE will bring staffing down to critical levels, creating serious delays in services to Montanans and Montana libraries. Existing staff of course will be forced to absorb additional responsibilities. Staff in the Library Development Division are direct points of contact for our Montana libraries, librarians and trustees, providing support, training and leadership to help us better serve our users.

State Library staff serves a total of 81 public libraries in Montana as well as numerous school, special, tribal and academic libraries and other organizations involved in joint projects that benefit Montanans. They travel the state from Sidney to Dillon and Libby to Cut Bank. Whether it is providing assistance in development of budget and policy, computer and professional development training, management and technical support for statewide services and tools such as the Montana Shared Catalog, statewide databases, MontanaLibrary2Go downloadable E-Content, the Ready2Read program for our youngest users, and the Statewide Pilot Courier Project, all of which librarians and members of our communities access and benefit from daily; additional demands on their time will directly impact and delay library services at the local level.

The vacant Natural Resources Librarian position may not be filled as part of the 5% budget reduction, which will impact outreach; for example, the Hunter Companion program, which was launched in 2010. The "Hunting Companion" website is a streamlined access point for the basic information every hunter needs for a successful hunt. It also provides the tools to help librarians field requests from hunters across the state. This is just one of numerous outreach services that will be impacted.

It is important for people to receive timely information and services, such as electronic access to digitized state publications. Remote access to many of these publications will be delayed due to budget reductions for the digitization project.

In this economic climate, it is even more important for people to realize what an important and valuable resource their local library is. We are busier than ever. In 2009, 4,429,464 people visited public libraries in Montana. Thanks to training received from the Montana State Library, librarians can do such things as provide computer training so that our users can complete a resume or apply for jobs and benefits.

On a personal note, I have worked in the library field in three states and can unequivocally state that the direct services our Montana State Library provides to Montana libraries, librarians and citizens is unequalled.

Local libraries depend heavily on the quality services provided through the Montana State Library to better serve members of our local communities.

I encourage you to visit the State Library website, particularly the Library Day page that highlights what your local libraries are doing daily for their communities.

I urge you to consider the direct impact any additional budget reductions will have on Montanans access to information and the wealth of resources made available through our State Library.

Please vote "do pass" on HB2 for the Montana State Library.

Judy Hart, Chair

Government Affairs Committee – Montana Library Association

120 S. Last Chance Gulch

Helena, MT 59601

406-447-1690 ext. 117

jhart@mtlib.org

Joint Appropriations Subcommittee on Education

Public Testimony

January 12, 2011

Representative Hollandsworth and members of the Committee:

For the record, my name is Honore Bray. I am the Director of Missoula Public Library and Branches in Seeley Lake, Condon and at Big Sky High School in Missoula. I am also the Federation Coordinator for Tamarack Federation which represents seven counties and many multi-type libraries in Western Montana.

I am in support of the Governor's budget for the Montana State Library.

Darlene Staffeldt, Montana State Librarian has described the depth of services offered through the State Library. These services are available to every citizen in Montana. A 2.25 FTE reduction in a small agency like the State Library will create delays in the services to your constituents across the State of Montana.

With today's technologies, citizens across the state access the digitized state document collection. A reduction in staff and funding of this program will delay the crucial research citizens perform when searching information for economic survival. Many citizens are seeking information for new business ventures, water rights for their properties, housing regulations and various other subjects that are pertinent to their quality of life in Montana. Citizens deserve and are use to having this information at their fingertips when needed and should not be expected to wait for a hard copy of the document at a later date.

State Library staff is available to help every library in Montana with technology issues. For all libraries this is an important function. Libraries in small Montana Communities may only have one staff person and that person may not have the expertise to keep a computing center up and running. In today's society many employers are soliciting application via the internet. Libraries are an economic center in communities where the public can find job information and receive help in steps to become employed. Technology services provided by the State Library are very important for the future of employment for Montana citizens.

Montana citizens are able to access information on every level due to management and implementation of projects through the State Library. Every community in Montana has the opportunity to sign on to the projects and provide equal access to information for their communities. Group purchasing of products for the state makes it affordable for all libraries and communities that are interested. Downloadable Audio books, EBooks, the Ready2Read program for early literacy, the Hunter Companion program and the Montana Shared Catalog with 139 libraries sharing one system are only a few of the innovative projects brought forth from the State Library.

Please consider the direct impact that will come to your communities from the reductions in the State Library Budget. This is a State Agency that serves all communities on the local level.

Please vote "do pass" on HB2 for the Montana State Library.

Thank You for your time.

Honore D. Bray
Missoula Public Library
301 E. Main Street
Missoula, MT 59802
406-258-3860
hbray@mtlib.org

Joint Appropriations Subcommittee on Education
January 12, 2011
Public Testimony

Chairman Hollandsworth and Members of the Committee:

For the record my name is Sandra Conrady. I serve on the Lewis & Clark Library Board of Trustees, and have been a Library Trustee since 2004. I am also a member of the Montana Library Association and an avid library user.

I am in support of the Governor's budget for the Montana State Library.

With the economic downturn more Montanans rely on services offered through their state and local libraries. Fewer dollars both at the local and state level for libraries at a time when the public wants and needs more, not less, has a direct impact on library services.

If we're serious about education in this state, and serious about leveling the playing field so that everyone has a chance to compete in this economy, then we need to continue to be serious about library services.

Provision of training and professional development opportunities offered through the State Library is critical for librarians and trustees. Staff in the Library Development Division at the State Library consults with and assists communities in planning library service for the future. They provide technology support and coordinate statewide professional development for librarians, library para-professionals and trustees. The State Library also supports the six regional library federations in Montana, a program in the State Library budget.

Training offered through the State Library for trustees and librarians that serve at the local level is primarily funded by grant awards, particularly funds received through the Library Services and Technology Act. The proposed reduction of 2.25 FTE and the additional demands that will be placed on staff will impact statewide training opportunities.

It is often difficult to fill Library Board positions; library trustees are community volunteers from all walks of life charged with enormous responsibility. It is crucial that trustees understand Montana Library Law, budget and policy. I was part of the Library Board Education Training Program, a mentoring program provided through the State Library a few years ago. I, as well as several other trustees underwent in-depth training with State Library staff. We in turn travelled the state providing training for local library trustees. As I travelled throughout the state I realized how invaluable this training was to local boards that were committed to providing strong leadership. They asked informed

questions and learned more about their responsibilities as a trustee. I have learned the importance of providing quality, ongoing training for our library trustees.

Unfortunately, this program is no longer funded by the Library Services and Technology Act. The State Library does strive to offer training for trustees, however limited funds and further demands on their time due to reductions in staff, has and will have an impact.

In the big picture of the state budget, the library portion is modest. But these modest dollars invested in libraries today pay big, big dividends. I urge you to consider the direct impact any additional budget reductions will have on provision of quality library services, sound local governance of our libraries, and Montanans access to information resources.

Thank you for the opportunity to speak with you today.

Please vote "do pass" on HB2 for the Montana State Library.

Sandra Conrady

Trustee, Lewis & Clark Library Board

c/o Lewis & Clark Library

120 S Last Chance Gulch

Helena, MT 59601

Phone: 406-227-0725

Email: conrady0725@msn.com

Presentation provided January 12, 2011 before Appropriations Joint SubCommittee on Education.

Chairman Hollandsworth and members of the Committee, for the record my name is Darlene Staffeldt (S T A F F E L D T) and I am your State Librarian.

Thank you for providing me with the opportunity to speak to you today. I would like to introduce Kris Schmitz, Central Services Manager and Jennie Stapp, Director of the Digital Library, who are two of the State Library's Managers . Additionally, I would like to introduce to you Don Allen, who is the Chairman of the State Library Commission.

During my presentation today, I may occasionally refer to one of two documents, which you all received last week. Please let us know if you do not have them with you as we do have a few extras with us today. They include:

- (1) A twelve page hand out that follows my presentation, and
- (2) The 2011 legislative snapshot booklet. I hope you have had a chance to review the snapshot and have found it useful and that you will keep it close by so that you may continue to use it in the future.

The State Library was originally established in the 1929 Legislative Assembly; over the years, resources have changed but our public purpose has remained consistent: to ensure that all Montanans have access to the highest quality information in order that **Montanans, including you, your friends, neighbors and constituents**, can make informed decisions regarding situations that impact our lives on a daily basis. We accomplish this by creating and supporting services that meet the information needs of Montanans and by providing unmatched support to libraries throughout Montana.

In part, the Mission of the Montana State Library, found on page 2 of your handout, is to:

- Ensure that all Montana citizens have access to information created by their government,
- Support the role of all Montana libraries in delivering quality library content and services to their patrons,
- And ensure that Montanans who are visually or physically handicapped are provided access to library resources.

In order to carry out our functions, we have evolved into an operation able to manage the incredible amount of information created by Montana's government. We provide quality library services to 12,000 state employees. We make our online collections of state government and natural resources information freely available, around the clock, via the Internet to all citizens in Montana and beyond. We directly indirectly serve all 761 Montana libraries. And we serve approximately 3,500 Montanans who are visually or physically handicapped and thus unable to read traditional print materials.

The State Library is governed by a seven member board. Five members are appointed by the Governor. The remaining two members are the Superintendent of Public Instruction and an appointee of the Commissioner of Higher Education. The chair of the commission is Don

Allen of Billings who is with us this morning. Information on the other Commission members is provided on page 2 of your handout. They work hard to ensure that all areas of Montana are represented and that the State Library works hard to meet the goals of our current strategic plan, which are provided to you on page 3 of the handout.

For the purpose of the budget and legislature, the Montana State Library is one program but MSL has two major divisions: the Digital Library and the Statewide Library Resources Division. Administrative support is provided through a small central services section, and information technology support is provided through our Digital Library division.

First, I will talk about the Digital Library, which includes Library Information Services, Montana Natural Heritage Program, and our Natural Resource Information System

The Digital Library, a very specialized library that manages government and natural resources information, is being transformed by the digital evolution. The Legislative Snapshot 2011 booklet is a product created by our Digital Library Division and demonstrates the benefits of linking traditional library research services with modern information technology.

Some of the materials represent research conducted by our Library Information Services staff as they fulfill a more traditional library role. These six staff manage the Montana State Publications Center, a statutory service of the State Library. Additionally they offer federal publications, select and maintain electronic journals and on-line subscription databases for use by our patrons, and they have the content knowledge to help you find the answers you need from the overwhelming amount of information available to you.

Library Information Services is actively engaged in a project to digitize our existing print collection through a partnership with the Internet Archive. MSL chose to contract with the Internet Archive to complete this project because it is the most cost effective option available. Cost aside, it is clear that this was the right decision as our patrons benefit from the numerous technological enhancements this organization adds to the online Montana State publications we make available.

The Wildlife and Recreation pages in your legislative snapshot provide wildlife information specific to the region that contains your district. Much of this information came from the State Library's Montana Natural Heritage Program. We all know that Montana's natural resources are

critical for our citizens and economy, and are essential to our quality of life. Good information regarding our state's plants, animals, and habitats is necessary to maintain this natural heritage as the state continues to grow and develop. Ready access to this information saves everyone time and money.

For more than 25 years, the Natural Heritage Program has provided an objective, one-stop source for information on Montana's animals, plants, and habitats. As another statutory program of the State Library, The Natural Heritage Program provides access to its information and services in an objective and neutral manner. As part of the Digital Library, The Heritage Program provides ready access to information on Montana's animals, plants, and habitats to resource managers, Montana businesses, landowners, educators, students, and recreationists. Heritage data products, including the Montana Field Guide and web-based mapping applications, are used extensively every day. Each year several thousand requests are filled by our expert staff while our web resources receive tens of thousands of hours of use around the clock seven days a week.

The last section of our Digital Library, also required by statute, is the Natural Resource Information System (NRIS), which provides comprehensive access to data about Montana's natural resources through the dissemination of location-relevant information in formats such as maps and online mapping services. NRIS staff works with state and federal agencies to acquire the most current information available. We then aggregate this natural resource information and share it in an easily referenced format.

Examples of information in your booklets made available by NRIS with the help of our partners include information related to land, water, forest ecology, fire, drought and energy development. The tables and maps in the legislative snapshot show the power of integrating information from multiple sources, making it relevant by placing it in geographic context, and allowing users to view data for a particular area, be it a legislative district, a county, a watershed, or other geographic area.

In 2008 with funding from the Legislature, NRIS launched the Montana GIS Portal. The Portal functions much like an online library catalog. Users can search for geographic information by subject, geographic area, title, publisher, and more. This portal is designed to assist geographic information professionals, as well as the general public, as they find and use geographic information about Montana. Like the value in biological information provided by the Natural Heritage Program, geographic information is critical to the well-being of the state. The Geographic information that is provided by the GIS Portal helps inform citizens on everything from how to improve farmers' irrigation to helping foresters manage pine beetle in our national forests. An information summary, like the ones in your legislative snapshot, would not be possible without the cooperation of our partner agencies as well as the foresight of previous legislative bodies who understood the value of making quality natural resources information available to all through an unbiased, non-regulatory agency like the State Library.

Now I will discuss briefly the Statewide Library Resources Division, which includes Library Development, Montana's Talking Book Library, and the Montana Shared Catalog.

Our Library Development division is key to excellent library services across Montana and provides many services required by statute. This program focuses on concerns of libraries across the state, including the libraries **in your home towns**. With operations based in Helena as well as in three other sites statewide, a professional staff plans, develops, and implements programs on topics such as budget preparation, long range planning, public library standards, training, computer networking, and library automation.

This staff administers funds for new and improved services throughout Montana. For example, the current statewide Pilot Courier Service, funded with one time only monies in 2009, currently serves 38 libraries in Montana communities. During the first 8 months of the pilot, these libraries saved over \$63,000 in resource sharing costs over the use of traditional shipping methods.

Library Development provides access to Montana online library catalogs, they partner with Montana libraries to ensure the delivery of quality library materials to all Montanans and they manage joint purchases of statewide services. Statewide contract negotiations have resulted in expanded information content such as career databases, car repair databases, better Internet connectivity and more computers in libraries for all Montanans to access. One example of a statewide purchase that the State Library facilitated is the very popular MontanaLibrary2Go program which makes electronic books available to patrons of 44 libraries around the state. This program costs participating Montana libraries between \$700 and almost \$12,000 based on the number of patrons each library serves. A library that serves 20,000 to 24,000 patrons such as the local Lewis and Clark Library pays \$4,200 annually for this service. If a library of this size was to purchase this same collection on its own, the cost would be \$40,000 each year. If the State Library hadn't negotiated a statewide contract,

most, if not all, Montana libraries would not be able to provide this tremendously popular service to their communities.

The Library Development staff has received funding for several grants from a variety of sources. These grants-funded scholarships encourage and enable Montanans to become professional librarians and support public access to the Internet in public libraries. These resources are helping Montanans in many ways. For example, Montana's displaced workers use their libraries to learn about job opportunities, compile resumes, interview for jobs online, and complete licensing and certification testing requirements.

Another statutory section of the State Library is our Talking Book Library which provides library services for individuals who are not able to read traditional print and provides the only access point for Montana citizens to the National Library Service's Talking Book collections.

Our Talking Book library, which is staffed by only six FTE and over 100 volunteers, includes approximately 67,000 book titles, as well as magazines, descriptive videos, and a children's collection. Each year we circulate over 157,000 materials to Montanans who have no other place to turn for library resources.

Most of the audio books are provided by the National Library for the Blind, which also provides the play back machines and accessory equipment. In order to provide our patrons with access to Montana authors and other titles that may be of interest to Montanans, we operate two recording studios – one at the State Library and one at the Montana State Prison. These studios provide the most advanced equipment available and The Talking Book Library's recording project records an average of 50 Montana-related publications every year, nearly all through volunteer time.

Finally, The Montana State Library, through the Montana Shared Catalog, has helped libraries share information in ways no one could have previously imagined. Thirty years ago, Montana libraries mailed a "ticker tape" list of books needed by their patrons to all other participating libraries in the state, hoping that one library might have the needed book and share

it. The process could take up to six weeks. Today, we have the Montana Shared Catalog – what used to be found in the card catalog at each of these local libraries is now joined with catalogs from all participating libraries, on-line for you to search, anytime, from anywhere over the internet. You can find the book you want and obtain it, even if it is not in your local library's collection. And in many cases you can have it in your hands the next day thanks to the Montana Shared Catalog. The Montana Shared Catalog currently serves over 450,000 Montanans, 88 Montana communities, and 133 libraries.

I would like to briefly address some of the direct questions your staff asked of us:

What was the agency thought process behind developing this budget?

Knowing that the overall guidelines for budget development for the 2013 biennium are that there are to be no new monies and reductions are a must, last year the State Library managers developed a chart of all services, answering each of the following critical questions:

- Is the service required by statute, provided elsewhere by another agency or program, included as part of our strategic plan?
- Is the service used by our partners and patrons including Montana citizens?
- How many FTE are involved?
- What is or are the funding source(s) and do the services provide part of a match or maintenance of effort monies?
- How interwoven are they with services?
- What are the reduction impacts now and in the future?

The results of our budget review process were shared with our Commission at open public meetings and we continually ask our partners and patrons what their priorities are for the State Library's services. Our philosophy continues to be to provide those services that are most critical to meeting our public purpose in the most cost effective manner possible.

What challenges did and will the agency face in budget development?

- Balancing needs of multiple projects, products and services;

- In addition to the 5% reduction, including 2.25 FTE reductions, we are faced with the potential of 8 retirements within this next biennium.
- A 4% vacancy savings requirement will mean an additional one to one and a half positions that will have to remain unfilled. Thus almost four full FTE less to provide the services to Montana's citizens and libraries.
- Meeting citizens' expectations, as one Librarian recently stated "But really – you all provide so many valuable services that it is impossible to pick one favorite! Even ranking the favorites would be tough we just want everything!"
- As the economy shrinks and budgets get tighter in each Montana household, our local libraries get busier and busier. Citizens have been turning to libraries in record numbers to find internet access to look for jobs, to get information on legal and health issues, to find out how to start their own business, to complete public services forms, or to finish homework.

While a five percent reduction may not seem significant, the impacts that reduction places on staff, services, programming, and, on all citizens of Montana, is tremendous. For the State Library, a 5 % reduction would mean:

- Reduction of 2.25 FTE out of 30.5 current level FTE, a cut that seriously weakens the agency across the board.
- Critical impact on staffing, particularly on individual(s) whose jobs will be lost and on those services affected by lost positions.
- This reduction in personnel will directly and indirectly impact citizens of Montana. For example, if the Natural Resources Librarian position, which has been left vacant to meet vacancy savings requirements, is not filled,

acquisition of new natural resource materials will be slower, outreach to agencies will be less routine and patrons may not know about all the information we can provide to them for their research. And if a support position is reduced, librarians and the citizens they serve, will not get answers to their inquiries as quickly as necessary and remaining professional staff will be required to spend more time on administrative tasks.

- A 5% reduction will require longer replacement schedules for computers and other critical information technology.
- A 5% reduction in Coal Tax Revenue will also significantly slow the process to digitize the state publications collection which will greatly reduce our ability to ensure access to Montana's government by Montana's most rural citizens.

As you consider these difficult budgetary decisions and weigh the consequences they will have on the State Library, I do ask you to support three decision packages presented in your book on page E-77. They are:

- DP-1, LSTA grants
- DP-2, Standard cost adjustments
- DP-4 One time only funding for continuing education and certification.

Is the Montana State Library efficient and effective, do we make wise use of the resources allotted to us? Yes, a thousand times yes. A recent national study conducted by OCLC, a worldwide library consortium, entitled Libraries: How they stack up reports that "One way to measure a library's service value is use cost-benefit analysis. Each public library in this sample returned substantially more than \$1 of benefits to its patrons for each \$1 of annual local taxes. Reviews from across the country project the return on investments that libraries bring to their communities are as high as \$10.00 for every dollar spent.

I hope through my presentation that I've demonstrated some of the positive outcomes that result from the hard work of the staff of the State Library. We are successful when you and the citizens of Montana have access to the information you need and when your libraries can provide resources and expertise that, due to cost and/or lack of training would be out of reach for many of Montana's libraries.

I've been a librarian for more than 33 years and have witnessed firsthand how my profession has handled the tremendous increase in information in all its various forms. We have adapted as capably as any profession, managing our public computers and serving growing numbers of patrons, but it seems that our work has been all but invisible to those in power.

In my discussions with Montana librarians, I've talked with librarians whose jobs have expanded with the demand for computers and training, and because so many other government services are being cut. The people left in the lurch have looked to the library, where kind, knowledgeable professionals help them navigate the government bureaucracy, apply for benefits, and access social services. But if you visit your local public library, you will see an essential service in action, as librarians help people who don't have other ways to get online, can't get the answers they urgently need, or simply need a safe and warm place to bring their children. I've stood in the parking lot of many public libraries as the doors have opened for the morning and watched families pour through those doors, heading in all directions to do homework or genealogical research, attend computer classes find information about their government, read the newspapers, look for jobs.

We librarians are idealists, who believe that accurate information leads to good decisions and that exposure to the intellectual riches of civilization leads to a better world. The next Abraham Lincoln could be sitting in their library, teaching himself all he needs to know to save the country. In fact, Montana's own Maurice Hilleman, who pioneered preventative medicine and developed over 40 vaccines, including those for mumps, measles, and chickenpox, credited the library in his hometown of

Miles City for his interest in medicine. In the Miles City Public Library, Hilleman checked out the books he needed to explore our world and the rest, as they say, is history – much like many of the diseases that Hilleman helped to eradicate from the Earth. Today, librarians help us get online, look for jobs, apply to schools, register for social services, navigate government information, learn new skills. Your local librarian represents the best civic value out there; we are a small army of resourceful workers that can help you, your neighbors – all of Montana, in fact – compete in the world.

But instead the school libraries and public libraries in which we've invested decades and even centuries of resources will disappear unless we fight for them, and I hope you will join me in that fight. Those lucky enough to own computers, and have high-speed Internet service and on-call technical assistance, will not notice the effects of a diminished public library system — not at first. Whizzes who can whittle down 15 million hits on a Google search to find the useful and accurate bits of info, and those able to buy any book or article or film they want, will escape the immediate consequences of these cuts.

Those in cities that haven't preserved their libraries, those less fortunate and baffled by technology, and our children will be the first to suffer. But sooner or later, we'll all feel the loss as one of the most effective levelers of privilege and avenues of reinvention — one of the great engines of democracy — begins to disappear.

I extend an invitation to you to visit the State Library any time. You have a hard-working staff at your State Library. Please support the State Library so we can continue to do great work.

With your permission, I have been asked by Kristin Smith President of the Montana Association of Planners to share this letter with you. May I pass copies out?

I would ask that you let Montana State Library Commission Don Allen say a few words now.

Chairman Hollandsworth and Members of the Committee, thank you for your time and attention, please let me know if you have any questions.